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GOLDEN WEDDING.

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE MARRIAGE OF

Jesse Sawyer and Elizabeth Goodell,

FEBRUARY 11, 1869,

BELVIDERE, ILLINOIS,

WITH

Notices of the Family Since 1639.

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GOLDEN WEDDING.

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NOTICES OF THE FAMILY.

Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Sawyer, of Belvidere, Illinois, celebrated their Golden Wedding, February 11th, 1869, when their marriage certificate was produced, and is as follows:

Married on the 11th day of February, A. D. 1819, in Watertown, Jefferson county, New York, by Rev. Daniel Banks, Jesse Sawyer and Elizabeth Goodell, both of Watertown.

Jesse Sawyer was a son of Thomas Sawyer, and his wife Susanna, [Wilder,] and was born in Plymouth, Vt., May 24th, 1796. His wife Elizabeth was a daughter of Joel Goodell, and his wife Mary, [Swain,] and was born at Halifax, Vt., March 17th, 1794.

Thomas Sawyer and Joel Goodell both emigrated from Vermont to Watertown, N. Y., in 1801. They and their families were models of industry, and eminently religious. Previous to the building of churches, and when even school houses were scarce and small, Thomas Sawyer's house, and even his barn when empty, were always open for religious meetings, and often witnessed large assemblages.

Thomas Sawyer was born at Sterling, Mass., in 1757, and died prematurely at Watertown, aged 68, in 1825. His wife lived to be 91. She was a woman of uncommon energy and excellence,

and in the early settlement of Watertown supplied the place of a female physician, with a practice extending to several adjoining towns. She was distinguished for kindness and good nature both at home and abroad, and was a great favorite with her grandchildren, to whom her characteristic advice on parting occasions was, "Be a friend to every body and you will never want a friend."

The homestead in Watertown is still retained in the family, and is owned and occupied by Joseph Sawyer, born March 7th, 1794, and his son Laurentus. Joseph celebrated his golden wedding a few months earlier than Jesse. Thomas Sawyer's family consisted of 11 children, of whom Joseph and Jesse, two younger sons, alone survive. Several of the others are represented by numerous descendants.

The lineage of the family is traced back through Thomas, born at Sterling, Mass., September 7th, 1757, his father Elisha, born at Lancaster, Mass., in 1720, his father Elias, born at Lancaster in 1687, and his father Thomas Sawyer, jr., born at Lancaster in 1649, to Thomas Sawyer, senior, who emigrated from Lincolnshire, England, to America in 1639, at the age of about 21, and was a native of England. Thomas Sawyer, senior, on arriving in this country, resided first at Rowley, Mass., but in 1647, went with its first proprietors to settle the then new town of Lancaster. He was married to Mary Prescott, and had a family of 11 children, of whom Thomas was the eldest. His wife Mary Prescott is of the same stock as Prescott the historian. On coming to this country he was accompanied by two brothers, one of whom died single. The other was married and became the head of a numerous family. Thomas had seven sons, Thomas, Ephraim, killed by the Indians at the age of 10 or 11 years, Joshua, James, Caleb, John and Nathaniel, and four daughters, Mary, Elizabeth, Deborah and Martha. Martha, the youngest of his children was born Aug. 10th, 1673. The names of these children are all taken from Scripture worthies, and in-

dicate the religious character of the parents. Thomas Sawyer, sen., died at Lancaster, Sept. 12, 1706, aged 88, when his eldest son Thomas was 57, and his grandson Elias, the next in the succession, 19.

Thomas Sawyer, jr., having early lost this first wife, married Hannah ——, Nov. 21, 1672, by whom he had four sons, Bazaleel, William, Joseph and Elias, and two daughters, Mary and Hannah. His second wife having died, at the age of 69 he married Mary White. He died in 1736, aged 87, when his youngest child Elias was 49 years old, and his grandson, Elisha, 16, Thomas Sawyer, jr., and Elias his sixth and youngest child, then a young man 18 years old, were taken captive by the Indians in 1705, and carried to Canada, where they built the first saw-mill in that province, and taught parties to work it, as the price of their liberation by the Governor. Thomas Sawyer, jr., was also one of the first proprietors of the then new town of Sterling, but his property there was not occupied till his grandson Elisha took possession of it and made it his home.

Elias Sawyer married Beatrice Haughton, by whom he had two sons, Elijah and Elisha, and three daughters, Betsey, Thankful and Prudence. He lived to be aged, but the precise time of his death is not known.

Elisha Sawyer married Miss —— White, by whom he had three sons, Elias, Elisha and Jotham, and four daughters, Thankful, Prudence, Ruth and Grace. His first wife then dying, he married Miss —— Hust, by whom he had Thomas, Jesse's father, and four daughters, Beatrice, Susanna, Hannah and Betsey. He died prematurely at the age of 50. Elisha Sawyer was Jesse's grandfather, and died at Sterling in 1770, when Thomas Sawyer 3d, Jesse's father, was 13 years old.

Thomas Sawyer 3d lived in Sterling till about 1789, when he removed to Plymouth, Vt., and in 1801 to Watertown, as aforesaid. He had four sons, Elias, Thomas, Elisha and Jotham, and

two daughters, born in Sterling, and four sons, Elisha 2d, the first having died, Joseph, Jesse and Ezra, and one daughter, Eunice, born in Plymouth. His descendants of the second and third generations are numerous and widely dispersed.

The other branches of the family are still more numerous, and are scattered through most of the States. Boston has several of them, and in 1851 a meeting of the Sawyer family was held there, and a society formed with Frederic W. Sawyer, 20 Court Street, Boston, for its secretary, to collect the statistics of the entire family. The late Dr. Samuel Sawyer, of Cambridge, had the work in hand for some years, but it is still incomplete.

It is due from their descendants, to this ancestry, that its memory should be preserved and studied. Too much of its history is lost already, but if the different branches of the family will collect and preserve what still remains, it will be an invaluable legacy for their descendants, and contribute in all time to perpetuate their ancestral virtues, and to put coming generations on the track of the still better and nobler to which divine laws continually impel.

When Thomas Sawyer, senior, came to this country in 1639, Charles I. was on the throne of England, Cromwell, 36 years of age, was yet undistinguished, and England was just entering on a course of agitation and conflict, the most memorable in its history. Since that time, five generations of this family have passed entirely away in this country, Joseph and Jesse represent the sixth, and their children the seventh. Of these the eldest son, Hon. Lorenzo Sawyer, is an eminent lawyer and civilian, residing at San Francisco, California, who after filling other important judicial positions, is at present the honored Chief Justice of that State. Hon. Joel Swain Sawyer, the second son, also a lawyer, is a successful land agent, residing at Chatfield, Minnesota, whose business capacity and usefulness command for him the highest consideration both in his adopted State, and

in several other States to which his business has extended. The other children are William J. Sawyer, and Mrs. Mary E. Williams, both of Belvidere, Illinois, and George W. Sawyer, of Chatfield, Minnesota.

Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Sawyer, early united with the Presbyterian Church, and during the great revivals in Northern New York, in 1822, and later, were in full sympathy with those extraordinary movements, and contributed their best endeavors to advance them. They have been untiring and unremitting in their endeavors to fill up life in all its departments, with as much usefulness as possible, during the entire period commemorated by their Golden Wedding.

REUNION OF RELATIVES.

On the morning of Thursday, February 11th, A. D. 1869, the family and near relatives of Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Sawyer, had a reunion at the residence of Mr. William J. Sawyer in Belvidere, Illinois.

There were present Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Sawyer, of Belvidere, Illinois.

Hon. Joel S. Sawyer, his wife, and Nettie their daughter, of Chatfield, Minnesota.

Mrs. Mary E. Williams, Cora May and Carrie L., her daughters, of Belvidere, Illinois.

Mr. and Mrs. William J. Sawyer, of Belvidere, Illinois.

Mr. and Mrs. George W. Sawyer, of Chatfield, Minnesota.

Dr. Cyrenius Wakefield, of Bloomington, Illinois, Mr. Montgomery Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Allen Smith, Mr. Zenas Smith and Mrs. Bronson, of Belvidere, Illinois.

Letters of regret for necessary absence, but covering substantial tokens of remembrance, kindness and sympathy, were re-

ceived from Hon. and Mrs. Lorenzo Sawyer, of San Francisco, California, Mrs. Sylvia M. Van Epps, of Lima, Kansas, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Sawyer, of Watertown, N. Y., Rev. L. A. Sawyer, of Utica, N. Y., Rev. Elisha Sawyer, of Parma, N. Y., Mrs. Jason Fairbanks, and Mrs. Dr. Bates, of Watertown, N. Y., Rev. and Mrs. B. F. Sharp, of Mineral Ridge, Ohio, Mr. Orrin Wakefield, of Bloomington, Illinois, Mr. and Mrs. Nathaniel Goodell, of Lodi, Wisconsin, and Mrs. Persis G. Young, of Salt Lake City, Utah Territory.

The several letters were read and filed for preservation, when Hon. Joel Swain Sawyer, the eldest son present, delivered the following memorial address.

My Father and Mother:

In behalf of your children and more remote relatives and other friends, I congratulate you on this hopeful beginning of the second half century of your married life. You have now reached a point that few of us can ever hope to reach. You have passed a period of life, that few individually and fewer still in pairs, can hope to pass, a period so beset with dangers, that only though the guidance of more than mortal wisdom, can any one ever pass it in safety. But having passed those dangers, you may reasonably hope, through a quiet and serene old age, to enjoy the fruits of a well spent life.

Your lives have been in many respects eventful. You have witnessed a progress in all that pertains to human life, the recital of which would have astonished Methuselah at the end of his long pilgrimage, a progress representing the accumulated results of individual labor of which you have nobly performed your share.

You accepted the conditions of a laborious life, encountered its difficulties, endured its hardships, and sustained its burdens with the most exemplary courage and fortitude, never yielding to the allurements of ease or the gratification of selfish enjoyments. You wrestled with stern nature, and sometimes with adverse fortunes, in the forests of New England, New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio; and the prairies of Illinois and Minnesota, bloom with greater loveliness through your care.

You have not filled large spaces in the public eye, but your quiet, unobtrusive virtues have shed a brilliant lustre on your private life. You have not sought the applause or honors of the world, but you have enjoyed the affection and confidence of your neighbors, and endeared yourselves to all those needing your care, sympathy or consolation. You have not labored mainly for the meat that perisheth, but have sought "first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness," with a sublime confidence "that all other things shall be added" that are really needful. You have not sought eagerly nor secured largely what the world is pleased to term success, but who shall say what constitutes success in the vocabulary of Angels? Whether you would to-day exchange the success attained by yourselves, for all the glittering stores of the world's idols, I need not ask. You long since learned that greater is he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city, and you have acted accordingly. In the matter of success you have in a remarkable degree realized the prayer of Agur, "Remove far from me vanity and lies. Give me neither poverty nor riches. Feed me with food convenient for me." You have enjoyed to the full, this golden mean between good and evil, performing your humble duties in the fear of God, with a confiding trust in his goodness for all needed blessings.

Among your neighbors, in your family, and wherever your influence has reached, you have through the purity and unselfishness of your lives, afforded useful examples of the ennobling power of the Gospel.

To the principles of morality, virtue and Gospel truth, early instilled into their minds, enforced by your examples, do your children owe whatever of good may appear in their characters, whatever of success they may attain in life, whatever of public or private consideration and esteem they may inspire, and as a fitting return for your care, your integrity and the other Christian graces illustrated by your daily lives, you now realize the assurance of the sacred Proverbialist, that your "Children shall arise," as we do this day, "and pronounce you blessed."

The day was spent by the company, in reviving the memories of early years, in recounting the occurrences of the periods of their separation, in discussing various matters of interest to the family, and in the enjoyment of the festal provisions of their generous host and hostess.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES.

In compliance with a card of invitation, in the evening, the party that were present at the Reunion of the day, and about 60 others, assembled at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Sawyer, to celebrate their Golden Wedding. Rev. R. D. Eddy, of Belvidere, conducted the services, which were opened by singing the following hymn:

Fifty years have come and parted,
  Fifty April suns have shone,
Since the sacred word was spoken,
  Twain uniting into one.

Then in life's fair rosy morning,
  Hope's sweet bow above them bent,
With love's tender lamp new lighted,
  Forth in joyful trust they went.

Hand in hand, through shade and sunshine,
  Have they kept their steadfast way;
Sharing all the heat and burden,
  Of the long and toilsome day.

Sharing all the joy and gladness
  Which new loves and duties bring;
And through all, in faith reposing,
  'Neath the everlasting wing.

Now the evening shadows lengthen—
  Gently fall life's autumn leaves;
And they stand, the patient reapers,
  Loaded with their ripened sheaves.

Gone the blushing tints of morning,
  But the mellower scented light,
Fairest gleam of day celestial,
  Makes the Golden Wedding bright.

Thou whose hand thus far has led them,
  Be their staff and comfort still;
And their cup to overflowing,
  From thy fount of mercy fill.

Bless the filial hearts they lean on;
  Children's children make thy care
Till yon pearly gates shall open,
  And they all are gathered there.

The Scriptures were read from an old Bible entitled Mr. Pool's English Synopses, which has served the family as a Bible and standard Commentary through seven generations, and was introduced as follows:

I read from the word of God the 71st Psalm. The book from which I read has a precious history. Since its publication more than two hundred years have passed away,—more than one ninth of the entire period since the commencement of the christian era.

Rev. Mr. Eddy then addressed the aged pair as follows:

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My Beloved Friends:

The occasion which calls us together at this time is peculiar and rare. Few men can say Fifty years have I walked in peace and love with the wife of my youth. Not many women are permitted to lean upon the same helpful arm through a pilgrimage of half a century. Here and there one may be left, but the other is taken.

This is a time when conflicting emotions come thronging into the soul. It is a time of joy and thanksgiving, but also a time of sadness and regret. This anniversay is indeed golden with blessings. The light of God's countenance shines down upon these fifty years, glowing as they do with his mercies. Trials indeed have marked them. Your memories can recall more than one instance in which each of you has been apparently at the point of death, well nigh, or quite given up by those who watched over you. But restored by the hand of Providence you are permitted to look back with thanksgiving over all the way in which the Lord has led you.

But where are those who witnessed the vows that were taken by you fifty years ago? A generation born since the wedding day, has long been buried. Nearly all those gathered here to-day are but as your children or grandchildren But the congratulations we address to you, find their inspirations chiefly not in your earthly years so signally lengthened out, not in those thirty years during which your own immediate family has not been invaded by a single death, not merely in the fact that children well established

in the world remain to honor, cheer, comfort and cherish you amid the infirmities of age, but in the good hope through grace which is yours of a better world, and a still higher and happier life to come.

Our rejoicings with you to-day, are deepest when we remember that through the mercy that is in Christ Jesus, you are looking forward to the moment when your halting limbs, weakened and wearied by the toils of a long life, shall assume new vigor, and your souls new powers in the kingdom of the redeemed, never to fail or decline.

The address was followed by an appropriate prayer; the following hymn was sung to the tune of Exhortation; the hymn, tune, and books used, being the same that were used at the wedding fifty years before:

Since Jesus freely did appear
  To grace a marriage feast,
Dear Lord, we ask thy presence here,
  To make a wedding guest.

Upon the bridal pair look down,
  Who now before thee stand,
Their union, with thy favor crown,
  And bless their nuptial band.

With gifts of grace their hearts endow,
  Of all rich bounties best,
Their substance bless, and love bestow
  To sweeten all the rest.

And when that solemn hour shall come,
  And life's short space be o'er,
May they in triumph reach that home,
  Where they shall part no more.

At the conclusion of these exercises, the friends gathered around the aged pair to tender them their congratulations, and express to them their sympathy and affection. These were not signified by words alone. Many valuable presents were made as substantial tokens of affection, showing the occasion to have afforded the givers a golden opportunity for exhibiting the workings of their large hearts and liberal hands.